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13 August, 1999

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Documents Management Branch (HFA-305)  
US Food & Drug Administration  
Room 1061  
5630 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, Maryland 20852

ATTN: Dr. Jane Henney, FDA Commissioner

Dear Commissioner Henney:

I am writing to express my acute objection to feeding antibiotics used to treat human diseases to US poultry, cattle and pigs in order to speed their growth or to counteract the effects of crowded living conditions and poor hygiene.

Mounting evidence (and intuition) supports the position that the routine use of antibiotics in livestock may diminish the drug's ability to cure infections in people.

As you know, our arsenal of effective antibiotics for humans has suffered a sharp decline in effectiveness as target organisms adapt and evolve. While this evolution would occur even if human-use antibiotics were not fed to food animals, it seems very likely to me that the adaptation / ineffectiveness process is vastly speeded up by massive additions of human-use antibiotics to animal feed.

Factory farms appear to be using human antibiotics rather than spending the funds necessary to minimize disease in their animals or to allow their animals to mature on their own. Obviously, this is an extremely short-term approach, one that threatens the effectiveness of much of our (and the world's) medical system. Seen another way, it is an extreme privatization of benefits and a socialization of extremely high costs.

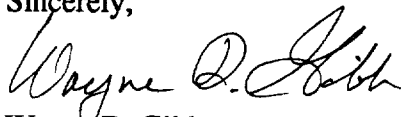
It is also, I believe, very, very wrong--and must be stopped.

The Food & Drug Administration has the responsibility to ensure that the use of antibiotics on factory farms does not endanger human health.

I urge you, in the strongest possible terms, not to allow any antibiotic to be used in livestock feed if that antibiotic is used in human medicine.

I would appreciate knowing your response to my request and look forward to hearing from you

Sincerely,



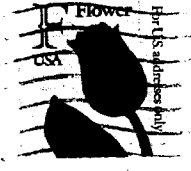
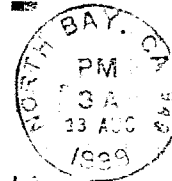
Wayne D. Gibb

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